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African Regional Centre for Solar Energy
Second Extraordinary Meeting of the Council

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 20-22 January 1986

LC/NAIROBI.

Report on the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy (ARCSE)

- The Present Situation -

1. The Inaugural Meeting of the Governing Council of the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy, convened by the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa under Article 12, paragraph 6, of the Constitution of the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy, was held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 12 to 14 May 1982.

Official Pronouncement of the Establishment of the Centre and of the Council

2. Under this item, the Chairman of the Meeting solemnly pronounced the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy officially established on 13 May 1982. The Constitution was in force for all the signatory States namely: Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinee, Gabon, Guinee, the Ivory Coast, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Uganda and Zaire.

3. The Chairman also announced the official establishment of the Council of the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy by recalling its composition as provided for in Article 7, paragraph 2, of the Centre's Constitution.

4. The representatives of Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Guinee, the Ivory Coast, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Niger and Uganda took the floor. They hailed the establishment of the Centre, stated the unqualified support of their respective Governments to ensure the smooth running of the Centre and stressed the important role the Centre would have to play in research, development and the utilization of the African continent's new and renewable sources of energy.

5. The participants expressed the hope that the Centre would not yet be another organization but rather an operational institution dedicated to the conquest of technology for development, training of African manpower and the promotion of co-operation in solar, wind and biomass energy in order to lessen the dependence of African countries on conventional sources of energy which were heavy burdens on their economies.

6. They stressed the importance of the Centre's objectives, referring specifically to the assistance it would give the member States in basic research, strengthening the existing national and subregional centres, the establishment of new centres and the co-ordinating of research and development activities in the area of the utilization of solar energy in Africa.

7. The establishment of the Centre was welcomed as being in line with the objectives of the Energy Chapter of the Lagos Plan of Action and as a follow-up to the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy held at Nairobi in August 1981.

Other Matters Dealt with by the Inaugural Meeting of the Council

8. The Inaugural Meeting of the Council of the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy dealt with the other matters that were on the Agenda for the Meeting. These are:

(a) The consideration of the document on the general principles and policies governing the activities of the Centre,

(b) consideration of the document on the annual and special contributions to paid by the member States of the Centre,

(c) consideration of the draft work programme and budget of the Centre,

(d) consideration of job descriptions, vacancy announcements and procedure for selecting the core staff of the Centre,

(e) election of members of the Executive Board of the Centre,

(f) selection of the location of the Headquarters of the Centre.

Election of the Members of the Executive Board of the Centre

9. According to the provisions of Articles 9 and 10 of the Constitution the Board was established comprising of the following members:

(a) The Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ex-officio Chairman of the Board),

(b) One-third of the member States of the Centre,

(c) The Executive Director of the Centre,

(d) The Director of National and Subregional Centre for Solar Energy.

10. Taking into account the fact that the number of member States for the Centre were 17 at the time of the Meeting, the Council decided that the Board should consist of six member States. After consideration of the current distribution of the member States of the Centre it was decided to elect the following member States as members of the Executive Board:

West Africa:	Mali and Nigeria
North Africa:	the Sudan
Eastern and Southern Africa:	Uganda
Central Africa:	Gabon and Burundi

11. The Board decided that as the number of signatory member States increased, representation on the Executive Board would be reviewed subsequently.

Selection of the location of the Headquarters of the Centre

12. The Governing Council failed to reach a consensus on the subject and referred the matter to an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council which was to be organized in six months to decide on the selection of the location of the Headquarters of the Centre. At the time of deferring this matter to the meeting of the Extraordinary Meeting there were four countries which offered to host the Centre. These are: Burundi, Djibouti, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Sudan.

13. The Extraordinary Meeting of the Governing Council of the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy was held from 7 to 10 January 1983. The Meeting which was convened specifically to decide the host country for the Centre, decided, after failing to reach an agreement on the host country on the following:

"(a) Consultation should be held at the highest level between the three countries, namely, Burundi, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Sudan in order to resolve the deadlock on the choice of the host country;*

(b) The Executive Secretary of ECA was requested to assist the three member States in their consultations;

(c) The three member States communicate the results of their consultations to the ECA secretariat within three months and the secretariat of ECA would, in consultations with the Chairman of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council, make arrangements to convene another meeting of the Council to consider the results of the consultations and to resolve the issue of the location;

(d) Should the result of the consultations proved to be negative the Council would be left with no alternative but to resolve the issue by accepting other candidatures and taking a vote to select the host country."

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* The countries contesting to host ARSCE were Burundi, Djibouti, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Sudan. During the Extraordinary Meeting Djibouti and Sudan supported Burundi; but Sudan further stated that it still remained candidate if Burundi was not chosen. During 1983 ECA received an application from Burkina Faso to host the Centre.

14. The secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa has been monitoring the negotiations that have been going on between the countries and until the Meeting of ECA Conference of Ministers in April 1985 the situation regarding the hosting of the Centre was still without a solution.

15. In April 1983 the ECA Conference of Ministers set-up an Ad Hoc Committee to look into the evaluation and harmonization of the activities of the African multinational institutions sponsored by ECA and OAU. In the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee established by resolution 477 (XVIII) on ECA/OAU sponsored institutions (document No. E/ECA/CM.11/17/Add.1), the Committee recommended three options for the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy. First option was that the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy should be merged with African Regional Centre for Technology (ARCT): the cost of which would depend on whether the host Government could provide the extra facilities that would be required; the second option was to place the Centre close to the Centre régionale d'energie solaire (CRES) at Bamako: the cost of which would depend on what facilities were provided by the host Government and the economy of proximity what is supposed to be a well-established and internationally-supported subregional centre; the third option was the Centre to be merged with the existing CRES at Bamako. But since CRES was not an ECA-sponsored institution, this would depend on consultations and negotiations with the founding body of CRES and the host Government.

16. However, in resolution 550 (XX) "Report of the Ad Hoc Committee established by resolution 477 (XVIII) on ECA- and OAU-sponsored institutions", the Conference of Ministers recommended that the decisions of the Ad Hoc Committee on the co-ordination of activities of merger of institutions should not affect the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy. This decision was taken on the basis of some member States objecting to the inclusion of ARCSE in the above-mentioned decision. Consequently, the situation with regard to the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy is not affected by the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee.

17. In July 1985 the ECA secretariat received new information in the form of a note verbale from the Embassy of Burundi to Socialist Ethiopia stating that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was ready to support the candidature of Burundi to host African Regional Centre for Solar Energy. This note verbale was accompanied by a copy of a note verbale from the Popular Bureau of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya addressed to the Ministry of External Relations and Co-operation of the Republic of Burundi stating that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was ready to support the candidature of Burundi to host the Headquarters of African Regional Centre for Solar Energy.

18. This being the case, and taking into account the fact that Sudan and Djibouti had already indicated their support for Burundi to host the Centre, it was deemed necessary to convene a second extraordinary meeting of the Governing Council to take a decision on the location of the Centre.

19. This meeting therefore is convened specifically to look at the question of the location of the Headquarters of the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy.